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TRAIL GUIDE

Skidmore Crop Tree Demonstration Area

Flatwoods, WV



Arlyn W. Perkey



Northeastern Area
State & Private
Forestry



Cover Photo: Forest Service Chief, Jack Ward Thomas (left), and West Virginia State Forester, William "Bill" Maxey (right), visit the Skidmore Crop Tree Demonstration Area in Flatwoods, West Virginia.

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Acknowledgments

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the West Virginia Division of Forestry for their leadership in establishing the Skidmore Crop Tree Demonstration Area. The project is an example of how state, federal, and private people and resources can be brought together to accomplish more in partnership than each can do independently.

Robert D. Whipkey, Assistant Administrative Forester, coordinated activities of participants so the combination of contributions resulted in an end-product that is valuable to visitors.

District III personnel administered the on-the-ground implementation of the project.

District IV personnel provided the signs.



Introduction

Welcome to the Skidmore Crop Tree Demonstration Area established through the joint efforts of John Skidmore, the landowner; the West Virginia Division of Forestry; and the USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Area State & Private Forestry. This woodlot is in West Virginia's Forest Stewardship Program, which is part of a nationwide effort to encourage stewardship of the nation's non-industrial private forests. The goal of this program is to support accomplishment of landowner objectives that are in the public interest.

The Skidmore Demonstration Area provides visitors with an excellent example of how a landowner used Crop Tree Management to increase the production of benefits that are important to him as well as to current and future generations of Americans.




The trail through the demonstration area connects with a trail on the Braxton County Middle School Property which is part of their Outdoor Classroom. That trail was constructed through the joint efforts of the West Virginia Division of Forestry Urban and Community Program Group, the AmeriCorps Rural Development Team, the Elk Soil Conservation District, and the Gassaway Field Office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

A Note of Explanation

Crop Tree Management focuses on selecting and releasing individual trees to increase production of benefits consistent with landowner objectives. Therefore, it is important to realize that this concept, as applied here, recognizes three crop tree categories: *timber, wildlife, and aesthetic* — all of which can be managed individually, or in any combination within a woodlot.

Releasing crop trees means removing neighboring trees whose crowns are interfering with the crown of the crop tree. The intent is to provide growing space all the way around the crop tree crown to encourage accelerated growth. This is done by applying a crown-touching release, which essentially removes all trees (except for other crop trees) whose crowns come in contact with, or touch, the crop tree. In the event of two crop trees occurring close together, it is acceptable to consider their adjoining crowns as one and then release fully around the dual crown.

The illustration at right shows how the crown-touching release of crop trees is carried out. First, the crop trees with the best potential to fulfill the landowner's objectives are chosen. Next, the trees that are competing with the crop trees are marked for removal. And, finally, the competing trees are cut so that the crop trees will have more room and resources to grow better and faster.

	<p>Identify Crop Trees</p>
	<p>Mark Competing Trees</p>
	<p>Remove Competitors</p>

The Trail

Your walk along this trail will give you an opportunity to recognize the historical land use of the area and understand how the forest you see got here. You can also get an idea about how the forest of the future might be different. You will observe different species of trees and discover how this landowner chose to manage them to influence the benefits he wants them to produce.

To help you learn about the different species of trees you'll be seeing, aluminum identification tags have been placed on several trees along the trail. You will find a description of the tagged tree as you read this booklet. The various characteristics for each species that qualify it as a timber, wildlife, and/or aesthetic crop tree are explained. Booklet references to tree size are expressed as diameter in inches, which is measured at 4.5 feet above the ground.



The land to the left (Southeast) of this post was used as pasture for livestock for about 100 years. In the 1930's, agricultural use stopped, and this area began reverting to forest. The trees (oaks, hickories, walnuts, and maples) growing in a straight row with large, wide-spread crowns once bordered an old fenceline. They served as a seed source for the forest that now occupies this former pasture.



Most of the trees in front of you are hickories. They became established in the abandoned pasture by squirrels inadvertently dispersing nuts while

Land Use Change & Forest Growth Skidmore Crop Tree Demo Area



1939

Pasture is Abandoned.
Forest Regeneration
Begins.



1958

Trees are Pole Size
(about 5-10" diameter).



1990

Trees are Small to
Medium Saw-
timber Size
(about 11-18" diameter).

storing food for winter. Many of the small trees now growing under the hickories are sugar maples. They are able to grow in the shade of the hickory trees and will eventually replace them as the hickories mature and are harvested or die.

HICKORY

There are 5 species of hickory commonly found in West Virginia, often growing in association with oaks. They are all relatively slow-growing trees that have very tough wood, traditionally used for tool handles. Their slow growth rate combined with their generally low per unit value as a timber product makes them only moderately desirable as a timber crop tree. However, they are often a good choice as wildlife crop trees because the hickory nuts are an important source of winter-storable food. The quantity of nuts produced varies from year to year, but hickories have good crops more frequently than many other species that produce winter storable fruits. In the fall, hickory leaves transition from green to brown, with a yellow to gold stage in between that may be aesthetically attractive for a short period.

BLACK WALNUT

Black walnut has long been prized as a valuable timber crop tree because of its high-value lumber and veneer for the fine-quality furniture market. Trees with straight trunks and healthy crowns grow relatively fast on deep, well-drained soils often found on bottomlands and in drainages. Black walnut usually occurs naturally mixed with other species rather than in pure stands. It does regenerate on old abandoned pasture land on upland sites, but seldom grows rapidly on many of these dry sites with shallow soils. Also, trees growing on these sites seldom yield as much high-value timber as those grown on good sites. Walnuts are desirable winter-storable food for squirrels, as well as being very suitable for human consumption. Black walnut does not have impressive fall foliage; the leaves just wither and fall.



The hickory tree behind this post has been chosen as a wildlife crop tree. This portion of the forest is being managed to accomplish the landowner's wildlife objectives. These trees can be managed to increase production of hard mast (hickory nuts) for squirrels. This crop tree received a crown-touching release so its crown could expand and produce more nuts. Neighboring trees with crowns that touched the crop tree crown were cut.



Crop trees are selected to meet a landowner's objective for a particular area. If growing timber for a crop is an objective, foresters choose trees with characteristics that make them valuable. Trees with straight trunks are generally more valuable than trees with crooked trunks. There are two trees in front of you that would be poor timber crop trees because their trunks have a fork that occurs within a few feet of the ground. This reduces the amount of wood that could be sawn from the tree and used for lumber. It also increases the probability of the tree being damaged in a weather event, like an ice storm. The sugar maple tree on the right has a fork that has been broken. The sugar maple in front of you has a low fork that could also break.



The grass growing in this field is probably similar to the vegetation that was present when grazing stopped in the 1930's. If this area did not receive periodic mowing, it would revert to trees as other areas have done.



Sugar maple trees have beautiful leaves in the fall of the year. This landowner wanted to improve the aesthetics of his woodlot by releasing crop trees that have attractive fall foliage. These three numbered aesthetic crop trees (5, 6, & 7) were released by cutting or girdling competing trees. Their crowns can now expand and produce more brilliant foliage. Visitors will also be able to see the trees better now that the area is less crowded. The sugar maples around Tree 5 were girdled by

cutting a continuous band through their bark with a chain saw. These trees will die and quit competing, but they will remain standing. Standing dead trees provide wildlife species with a source of food and shelter.

SUGAR MAPLE

Sugar maple is competitive with other trees on nutrient-rich, moist sites where it can regenerate even in the shade of other trees. It is a good timber crop tree because its very hard wood can be used for a variety of products like furniture, hardwood flooring, and bowling pins. Sugar maple is known for the special forest product it can produce – maple syrup. Weather conditions further north and at higher elevations make maple syrup production a more reliable activity in those locations than here in central West Virginia. Sugar maple would not normally be selected as a wildlife crop tree because it does not have any particular characteristic that makes it uniquely valuable. However, its value as an aesthetic crop tree is outstanding because of its very attractive fall foliage. Its leaves vary in color from yellow to orange, and they often have a brilliance in color that is unmatched by any other species in the forest. Individual trees tend to turn the same color year after year. Therefore, a landowner who prefers trees that turn bril-

liant orange can favor those trees when making crop tree selections. Sugar maple is West Virginia's state tree.

YELLOW-POPLAR

Yellow-poplar can grow into a majestic timber crop tree. It often grows tall and straight, and when found on favorable sites, it grows very rapidly. For a hardwood, its wood is relatively soft, which when combined with its straightness, makes it more suitable for construction uses than many hardwood species. Recent markets for this tree include rail fences, construction lumber, and oriented strand board. When selecting timber crop trees, it is important to avoid selecting forked trees because yellow-poplars with that weakness are particularly vulnerable to breakage in weather events like wind and ice storms. Yellow-poplar is seldom selected as a wildlife crop tree because it is not a valuable source of food or shelter for many wildlife species. It may be selected as an aesthetic crop tree if the landowner likes to look at tall, straight trees with a pyramidal-shaped crown. Its fall foliage is an attractive yellow color. Yellow-poplar has a lovely blossom of yellowish-green petals with reddish-orange bands near the base. It looks somewhat like a tulip, hence the other common

name – tulip poplar. Unfortunately, the flowers are at their prime when the leaves are already on in the spring, so they do not stand out from a distance, and many people miss their beauty.



This broken hickory had a forked top. It was vulnerable to damage by weather events. The tree top eventually broke and fell to the ground to be recycled into the forest floor. While the natural process of decay takes place, downed woody material provides valuable habitat for wildlife species like woodpeckers.

The bump going diagonally across the trail is called a "waterbar." It is designed to deflect water off the walkway into the woods, where it will soak into the organic matter on the forest floor. These erosion control measures are commonly used on travelways through woods in steep topography.



Many years ago, when land was converted from forest to pasture, more than just the trees were removed. Understory vegetation, like this dogwood and spicebush that thrive in a forest environment, was also affected. Where residual trees were left, their shade reduced the competitiveness of the grass. Often the forest understory plants were able to survive in these small pockets. Gradually, these plants are spreading and re-inhabiting the new forest.

DOGWOOD

Dogwood does not grow large enough to be a commercial timber species. It may be regarded as a wildlife crop tree primarily because the fruit it produces is favored by numerous wildlife species. These bright red berries appear in clusters and ripen in October. Dogwood reaches its greatest fame as an aesthetic crop tree because of the 4 large, white, petal-like bracts that are often mistaken as flowers. The actual flower is inconspicuous in the center of the bracts. Although dogwood will grow in the dense shade of the forest, it reaches its full potential as an aesthetic and wildlife crop tree when released from overhead competition. The blossoms and fruits occur on the periphery of the crown. A tree that receives full sunlight produces many more beautiful bracts and fruits than a tree grown in shade. Unfortunately, it can often be very difficult to release an individual dogwood tree growing in a dense forest without damaging it. Since dogwood is generally a small tree, severe breakage often results if any larger tree falls against it.

RED MAPLE

Red maple grows across a wide range of sites, and its prevalence in the forests of West Virginia is increasing. Like yellow-poplar, its wood is softer than many other hardwoods, but it lacks yellow-poplar's characteristic straight, tall form. Consequently, it is usually much less desirable as a timber crop tree in this central West Virginia area. However, when an individual tree does have good form, it is an acceptable choice because red maple has a reasonably good growth rate and an intermediate per unit value for timber. Red maple is seldom selected as a wildlife crop tree unless it has cavities present that make it desirable as a den tree for a species of wildlife preferred by the landowner. Red maple can have beautiful fall foliage that varies in color from yellow to red. Trees that turn red can be especially brilliant. Red maple changes color earlier than many other hardwood trees noted for attractive foliage, so it is a pace setter for the annual display of fall colors. Young, rapidly growing red maples often have a smooth gray bark that can be rather attractive, especially in the winter when the leaves are down, and it is viewed with snow in the background. In spring the red flowers and buds of red maple are early signs of the beginning of seasonal change. The reddish cast of the trees may not be as spectacular as the fall showing, but it is pleasant to look at.

Skidmore Crop Tree Demonstration Area



BLACK LOCUST

As a timber product, black locust is best known for its traditional use for fence posts. Its resistance to decay, even when in contact with the ground, makes it desirable for that purpose. It frequently grows in old fields and fence rows in open-grown conditions. In these situations, it often develops forks and branches closer to the ground than desirable from a timber product perspective. It does not have a very high per unit value as a timber crop tree. Its rapid early growth rate and short lifespan often make it a candidate for removal to release other more desirable trees. The pod-like fruits are often persistent on the tree into the winter, and they are eaten by a variety of birds. In the spring the white fragrant flowers that hang in clusters are quite visible even though the leaves are already on the trees. These flowers may be considered attractive by some landowners, thus warranting their designation as aesthetic crop trees. However, their fall foliage is totally unimpressive when it withers and drops. In years when the locust leaf miner is prevalent, the leaves turn brown in August. The trees are seldom hurt by this pest, but its effect is highly noticeable and detracts from the appearance of the trees.



This yellow-poplar has grown larger than many other trees in the woodlot over the same period of time. This is partly because yellow-poplar is a relatively fast-growing species. Another reason is because the adjacent drainage makes this a very good place for yellow-poplar to grow. The moist soil here is conducive to rapid growth.



The straight, tall, yellow-poplar tree 50 feet in front of you is an excellent timber crop tree. Competing trees have been cut to provide more space for sunlight to reach its spreading crown.

REDBUD

Redbud is not a timber crop tree because of its small size. While it does produce flat pods that are visible in the spring, they are not regarded as being especially valuable to wildlife. Redbud is very attractive in early spring when its purplish-red flowers adorn the forest edges and old fields that are reverting to forest. It needs sunlight to produce a full crown of beautiful flowers. However, like dogwood, it is a small tree, and very susceptible to damage in crop tree release operations.



The conifer trees in front of you are hemlocks.

There's a large, old hemlock parent tree about 100 feet downslope, as shown in the photo at right, that was left standing when this area was in pasture. It became the seed source for the clump of hemlock growing in this sea of hardwoods. Since there aren't many conifers in this woodlot, these hemlocks are an attractive component of this landowner's forest.



WHITE ASH

White ash is most competitive with other species of trees when it is growing on sites that have moist soils. Favorable conditions for it often exist near streams and drainages where it can grow very tall and straight. It is a good timber crop tree because of its desirable form, its acceptable growth rate, and its good per unit timber value. Historically, it has been used for tool handles and baseball bats because its toughness makes it resistant to break-

ing. White ash splits easily, which makes it desirable for use as firewood, especially since it also yields good heat per unit of volume of wood. Firewood is a suitable use for small or crooked white ash trees that are competing with crop trees. However, white ash timber crop trees are much more valuable to use for lumber when grown to large sawtimber size (about 20 inches in diameter). White ash is seldom selected as a wildlife crop tree, unless it has cavities present that make it desirable as a den tree for a particular wildlife species. White ash has attractive yellow fall foliage that may have a purplish cast on some individual trees. Like yellow-poplar, landowners who enjoy the aesthetic attributes of straight, tall trees may favor white ash as an aesthetic crop tree.

HEMLOCK

Hemlock is used for rough construction wood, its utility being limited by its tendency to split easily when it is dry. Its unit value and growth rates are modest. It does have the characteristic of being able to grow very slowly in the shade of other trees for a long time, and then respond and grow quite well when it is released. As a wildlife crop tree, it is most valuable as a source of cover. Its dense foliage provides protection from cold winter winds.

Dense stands of hemlock in protected valleys are particularly important during severe weather events. Hemlock may also grow very old and large, making it a candidate for developing cavities that are used by wildlife. If there is a scarcity of conifers in the area, hemlock might be considered as an aesthetic crop tree because of its green needles in winter. Hemlock is currently being attacked by the hemlock wooly adelgid in some locations. Mortality in certain areas indicate it could be a serious pest for this species.

WHITE OAK

White oak is often found on fairly dry, south- and west-facing slopes. Its traditional use is in making whiskey barrels. In more recent years, however, it and some other oak species have found favor in the furniture market. It is a desirable timber crop tree species because of its relatively high per unit timber value, but its growth rate is modest. When selecting white oak crop trees, extra care must be taken to avoid selecting trees with



low-vigor crowns. Small branches on the trunk become knots in the lumber. Knotty lumber generally is worth less than clear wood. White oak is often selected as a wildlife crop tree because many wildlife species prefer the taste of white oak acorns. In the fall, white oak foliage transitions from green to brown with a rather attractive crimson red stage in between. Some landowners may consider the fall foliage sufficiently attractive to consider it as an aesthetic crop tree, especially since the tree also has characteristic white bark to contrast with the leaves. Like other oaks, white oak is a favorite host of the dreaded gypsy moth. When gypsy moth caterpillars eat all the leaves, the result is growth loss, acorn crop failure, and even mortality of trees. Anyone who has seen a complete gypsy moth defoliation will remember how unpleasant the experience can be.

SYCAMORE

Sycamore is most commonly found growing along stream courses; however, it also occurs on upland sites in relatively moist areas. Its value as a timber crop tree is limited to low value uses like boxes, crates, and pallets. It has a strong tendency to develop cavities, which interferes with its use as a timber crop tree, but makes it valuable as a wildlife crop

tree. Holes in the trunk and limbs provide opportunities for many cavity-dependent wildlife species to find a home. Sycamores produce a rather conspicuous spherical fruit, which is not particularly valuable to many wildlife species. The multi-colored, mottled bark of the tree is very unusual, and may be considered aesthetically attractive by some landowners. Bark color varies in patches from white to cream to brown to green.



The white oak on the left and the red oak on the right have been chosen as timber crop trees because they have the potential to produce valuable timber products. By giving them a crown-touching release, they are able to expand their crowns. Larger crowns enable the trees to produce more food for themselves. Consequently, their trunks will grow faster, making them more valuable timber trees in a shorter period of time.

RED OAK

Red oak grows on a fairly wide range of sites. It is one of the most valuable oak timber crop trees because of its high unit value and rapid growth rate. It is very responsive to release from competing trees, and on some sites, it grows as fast or faster than yellow-poplar. It is currently preferred for use in the furniture market and for hardwood flooring. Red oak is

often selected as a wildlife crop tree because of its rather abundant production of acorns. Although the taste of red oak acorns does not put them as high on the preference list as white oak acorns, they are a very valuable food source to many species of wildlife. Also, red oaks have bumper acorn crops somewhat more frequently than white oaks. The fall foliage of red oak transitions from green to brown with a deep, dull red in between. The fall foliage might be considered aesthetically attractive to some landowners, but it would not normally be regarded as brilliant enough to warrant classification as an aesthetic crop tree.

BLACK OAK

To the casual observer, black oak appears similar to red oak, and it is difficult to tell the two species apart by just looking at the leaves. The bark is the most reliable feature to distinguish between them. However, even people with experience may be temporarily baffled by individual trees. The wood of black oak is similar to red oak. Black oak can also grow rapidly on good sites, but it is often found on dryer sites than red oak because it is more competitive with other species under those conditions. Black oak does not live as long as red oak, so when selecting it as a crop tree, its

lifespan must be considered. The acorns of black oak are valuable to many wildlife species, so it is also a good wildlife crop tree. The fall foliage of black oak is similar to that of red oak.



Some of the trees littering the ground here were brought down by weather events. Other woody debris, or slash, is the result of cutting competing trees. This downed material provides food and cover for many species of wildlife.

CHESTNUT OAK

The deep, furrowed ridges that are characteristic of chestnut oak bark help to distinguish it from other oaks. Chestnut oak lumber is often sold at the same price as white oak lumber. However, the tree normally has a slower growth rate, partly because it is frequently found growing on ridges where soils are dry and shallow. Its acorns are valuable to wildlife, and it begins producing acorns at an earlier age than most other oak species. Chestnut oak begins acorn production at about age 20, but red oak doesn't normally have much production before age 50. Chestnut oak foliage transitions from green to brown with a short-lived dull yellow stage in between. It would not normally be selected as an aesthetic crop tree based on the beauty of its autumn leaves.



The growth of this sugar maple is being monitored. The blue line on the trunk is the place where the diameter of the tree is remeasured each year. The number on it is a unique identifier to help ensure that the correct data is recorded for each individual tree being monitored. Measuring the tree before growth begins in the spring, and again after growth has stopped in the fall, tells us how much it has grown during the year. That growth can be compared to what is normally expected for that species of tree. It also gives us an indication of the increase in growth that is a result of cutting its competitors.



A tree can be both a timber and a wildlife crop tree. For example, if a landowner wishes to accomplish both timber and wildlife objectives in a woodlot, the land manager should give high priority to selecting crop trees that meet both objectives. This white oak can produce hard mast (acorns) for a variety of wildlife species and, because it can also grow into a valuable timber product, it is both a timber and wildlife crop tree.



This powerline right-of-way may be viewed by some people as aesthetically unattractive. However, it does add some diversity to the vegetation. This may be good or bad, depending on the landowner's objectives. Since the land under the wires is kept free of trees, grasses and forbs are able to grow there. Wildlife species that depend on these plants, like goldfinches, benefit. The edge between the open land and the forest is especially beneficial to other species of wildlife, like

catbirds and wild turkeys. Some species of wildlife that benefit from large areas of unbroken forest, like the oven-bird, may be adversely affected by such openings.

BLACK CHERRY (WILD CHERRY)

Black cherry is found growing under a wide range of conditions, but it reaches its highest value as a timber crop tree when it is grown on relatively moist sites in competition with other trees during the early years of life. Under these conditions, tall, straight black cherry trees can be very valuable timber crop trees. When it seeds in on old field and pasture lands, it frequently has poor form because there is insufficient shade from adjoining trees to force it to grow straight. Black cherry has rapid height growth when young, but its diameter growth rate is modest. On desirable trees, the per unit value of black cherry is quite high because of the large demand for the wood in the furniture industry. Black cherry fruits are beneficial to a variety of wildlife species, including many songbirds. The fall foliage of the tree is unimpressive; leaves simply wither and fall without bright fanfare. Black cherry is a favorite host for eastern tent caterpillar. When this pest consumes its leaves, the tree can be weakened or killed.



This large, old sugar maple tree is a residual pasture tree. For many years, it provided shade for grazing livestock. When grazing stopped, it was an important seed source for many young sugar maple trees. In addition to its brilliant fall foliage, its large size and distinctive form are aesthetically attractive to many people. Since sugar maple seeds are dispersed by wind, the land downwind from the tree is likely to be populated by seedlings that originated from this tree.

Summary

Mr. Skidmore, a forest steward, has made an investment in this woodlot that will increase the benefits provided by the forest. Some of the returns will be financial as a result of the accelerated growth of timber crop trees. Other rewards will be the increased production of non-commodity benefits like food for wildlife and more attractive fall foliage.

In a stewardship plan, developed through the Forest Stewardship Program, managing to increase production of a wide range of forest benefits is possible. On this property, crop tree management was the tool used to increase the production of timber, wildlife, and aesthetic benefits.

The first full growing season of monitoring crop tree growth after treatment was the Summer of 1994. As anticipated, first year results were positive. Monitoring will continue as this woodlot is managed into the future for the benefit of all.

Want to Know More?

If you own a non-industrial private forest and are interested in more information about the Forest Stewardship Program, contact your state forester's office. The phone numbers for West Virginia and the five adjoining states are as follows:

West Virginia	304-558-2788
Pennsylvania	717-787-2106
Ohio	614-265-6694
Kentucky	502-564-4496
Virginia	804-977-6555
Maryland	410-974-3776

When calling, ask for the Stewardship Coordinator or someone who can provide information about the Forest Stewardship Program in that state. If your state is not listed, call any of the numbers above and ask them for the state forester's number for your state.

Glossary of Terms

Conifers - trees with needles instead of leaves.

Crop tree - any tree having the potential to produce a desired benefit.

Crown - the upper part of a tree, including the branches and foliage.

Crown-touching release - removal of all trees (except for other crop trees) that come in contact with, or touch, the crown of a selected crop tree. This release, or removal of crown-touching competitors, gives the crop tree more room and resources for accelerated growth.

Den tree - a tree with a hole or cavity that can be used by wildlife for a home or shelter.

Girdling - killing a tree by cutting a continuous incision about 1 inch deep around the circumference of the tree.

Overstory - the portion of the trees in a forest forming the upper crown cover.

Regeneration - the process by which a forest renews itself; the new growth that appears either naturally or following harvesting activity.

Residual tree - any tree that remains to grow and produce following a harvesting operation.

Slash - the woody material that is left on the forest floor following harvesting activities.

Understory - the portion of the trees in a forest that are growing beneath the taller, dominant trees that make up the overstory.

Veneer - a thin sheet of wood of uniform thickness.

Waterbar - a shallow channel, or raised barrier, e.g. a ridge of packed earth laid diagonally across the surface of a road to lead water, particularly storm water, off it.

The Steward



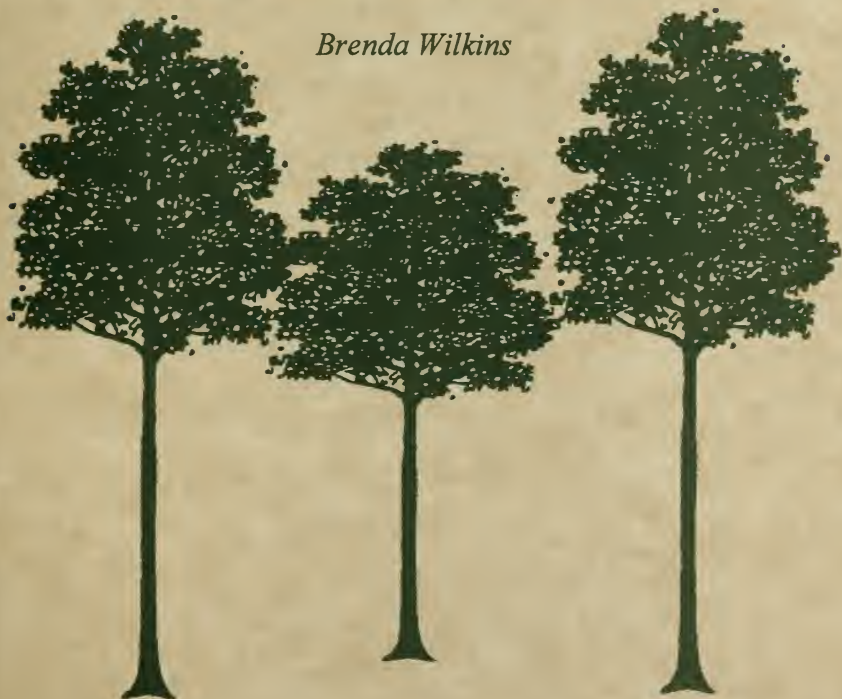
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*I walk through the forest in wonderment
of the beauty and life that abides
in the boughs of the trees,
and the depth of the leaves,
where the shyest of wildlife hides.*

*My steps fall silent on the forest floor
as I pause to appreciate nature's store
of renewable resource so rich and pure,
which I have the privilege to use and care for.*

*For those whose steps will follow mine
on this forest path one day;
I'll manage the resource to ensure
this beautiful legacy will endure,
and someone will know I passed this way.*

Brenda Wilkins





1022411619

Skidmore Crop Tree Demonstration Area

Adjacent to:

Days Inn
at
Flatwoods, WV



*In the Heart of
Wild, Wonderful West Virginia --
a Tree GROWING State*